



CONNECT

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“It is better to trust in the Lord
than to put confidence in man.”

Psalm 118, v. 8

Minister Revd John Gray details on Contact Page

Church Secretary Mrs Sally Edmondson

Dear Friends,

In 1987 Mary and I celebrated our Silver Wedding in Israel, and on a visit to Galilee went for a boat trip on the lake. It started well, and the water was calm but out of nowhere a violent storm arose and the boat was tossed about. Mary said afterwards that I went a bit green but I was probably thinking of the Titanic! The storm abated as quickly as it came and we landed safely.

In Matthew chapter 14 we read of a similar storm, which brings its lessons to us all. This past year our Church has been through choppy waters: we have been forced by law to close down our congregational worship and close fellowship; oh how we have missed the ministry of word and song and of course have lost dear members of our congregation who are now in Glory. So what lessons can we learn?

Firstly let us understand that the storms of life will batter us all (Matthew 7:25), but if we build our lives on Christ the Rock we shall stand. Jesus is always with us in the storm, and His first words to the Disciples were "Cheer up" (chapter 14 verse 27). He could add "It is I; which in the Greek is EGO EIMI, the very Divine title, "I Am", reminds us that the Messiah is the Son of God.

Cheer up! He expects us not to panic but to "be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10). We see Jesus walking ON the water showing His Divinity and supremacy, for even the waves obeyed Him.

Peter is anxious to follow Jesus, but taking his eyes off the Master he begins to sink. In times of trial we are apt to look at the waves around us rather than fix our eyes on the Master, but "Jesus caught him" (v.31) and criticized his lack of faith. In a similar incident in Chapter 8, after a great tempest on the lake He rebuked the disciples for their lack of faith (V.26) before rebuking the storm. God expects us to trust Him when things seem out of control as the hymn says: "With Christ in the vessel I smile at the storm"

So keep your faith and smile through the storm and we shall all reach the safety of the shore.

Yours in Christ

Jeffrey

Yet Another Word from your Treasurer:

I would like to thank everyone who has sent me cheques and made bank payments during the last month in lieu of their offering. This is very much appreciated as it helps to keep our current account afloat.

Thank You

Gavin and I would like to thank everyone who thought of us on the occasion of our Golden Wedding with your lovely cards and good wishes.

Isabel

A RESOLVE

I will be true, for there are those who trust me;
I will be pure, for there are those who care;
I will be strong, for there is much to suffer;
I will be brave, for there is much to dare;
I will be friend to all, the foe, the friendless;
I will be giving, and forget the gift;
I will be humble, for I know my weakness;
I will look up and love, and laugh, and lift.

Originally from Birkenhead newspaper 11/8/1962
given to me by my dad. Re discovered during lock down!

Sally

Janet Ford

As you will know our friend Janet passed away very peacefully at home on 24th August with Mike, her children and her sister Sara alongside her. I was privileged to visit her in St Peter's hospice this last week with Reverend Sue Cossey to have communion with Janet and Mike

I visited Jan on a few occasions when we had chats and especially "revisiting" our meeting with Mary Piggott at Almondsbury garden centre. They were able to support each other having the same cancer.

She also came here to sit in our garden for cuppa, chat and walk around looking at the flowers

Janet was such a brave lady especially over last year or so. She was always smiling and attended church services regularly also fundraising events we have held and enjoyed sewing her butterflies.

A true friend to all and always asked after all at church.

Jan is now at rest so please pray for Mike and all the family at this sad time

Sally

The family only Funeral Service will be held at South Bristol on the 8th September at 3pm, please pray for Janet and her family

The URC daily devotions

The URC daily devotions can be accessed via devotions.urb.org.uk These are approx 5 minutes long. The Sunday service can be accessed from the same site.

The Centre of the Bible

Q: What is the shortest chapter in the Bible?

A: Psalm 117

Q: What is the longest chapter in the Bible?

A: Psalm 119

Q: Which chapter is in the centre of the Bible?

A: Psalm 118

FACT: There are 594 chapters before Psalm 118.

FACT: There are 594 chapters after Psalm 118.

Add these numbers up and you get 1188

Q: What is the Centre verse in the Bible?

A: Psalm 118, v. 8

Q: Does this verse say something significant about God's perfect will for our lives?

The next time someone says they would like to find God's perfect will for their lives, and they want to be in the centre of His will, just send them to the centre of His Word:

Psalm 118, v. 8

"It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man."

Now isn't that odd? - (or was God in the centre of it???)

When things get tough, always remember:

Faith doesn't get you around trouble, it gets you through it!

Submitted by Mary Ponsonby

From: Ian Hardie, Treasurer of the United Reformed Church
and John Piper, Deputy Treasurer August 2020

To: The members and friends of all our 1,400 URC congregations

‘THANK YOU’ for your unique and vital contribution to the life of the United Reformed Church, and for the work of the kingdom which we are able to do together in God’s name

We are living through an extraordinary and challenging time – a very anxious time for everyone; a difficult time for many; and a time of suffering and loss for some. Yet, the main purpose of this letter is to say **‘thank you’** to each of you for all that you have done for the Church in the past; for all that you continue to do even in these difficult times; and for what you will do in the future.

As we are treasurers, you will not be surprised that the focus of this letter is on finance. But we recognise that finance is only a means to the end which is our doing of God’s work together.

‘Thank you’ for your giving to your local church. Financially, this giving is the lifeblood of your own church and of the whole United Reformed Church across England, Scotland and Wales. It is this personal giving that enables your local church treasurer to pay your church’s bills. Typically, the largest of those ‘bills’ is the contribution your local church pays to the URC Ministry and Mission Fund. This Fund meets the central costs of the United Reformed Church. The total budget is around £20 million and is approved each year by Mission Council. Over 80% of this money is spent on ministers and church related community workers – their training, stipends and pensions. But the other 20% also achieves an enormous amount on behalf of us all. General Assembly 2020 was severely constrained because of the

Covid-19 lockdown, but the reports written for General Assembly are available on the URC website, and they paint pictures of all the work that has been done in our name over the last two years and much of that work is ongoing.

‘Thank you’ for your giving and the giving of your local church last year. In 2019, over **£19.4 million was given by local churches and synods to the Ministry and Mission Fund.** The total contributions from local churches reduced very slightly but the average giving per member has, once again and remarkably, gone up by more than inflation.

‘Thank you’ for your continued giving this year. We fully understand that circumstances this year are difficult. Most local churches have been unable to meet for over five months. We have not had the usual opportunities to make our offerings for the work of the Church. But most of the costs of the local church and of the denomination have not reduced and some have increased as a consequence of the pandemic. We are also aware that some have lost income or work this year and are therefore in great financial difficulty. But there are others on fixed incomes who are actually better off than they might otherwise have been. **So, please continue to give what you can in whatever way you can – or save it up until you can hand it over.**

Any giving of ours is a response to the amazing generosity and love of God which we see in Jesus. Nevertheless, **it is important for us to say ‘thank you’ to each and all of you.**

If you have any questions or comments arising from this letter then please speak to your church treasurer, who has been provided with more detailed information. If they are not able to help directly then they can get in touch with the finance team at Church House.

Yours in Christ, Ian and John

It sometimes happens that Connect has a blank page which I try to fill with an article, poem or joke etc

On this occasion I have used a hymn which is a favourite of Stella's. If you would like your choice to be used please let me have details. I can't guarantee when it will be used but I will do my best.

Tony

I lift my eyes
to the quiet hills,
in the press of a busy day;
as green hills stand
in a dusty land,
so God is my strength and stay.

I lift my eyes
to the quiet hills,
to a calm that is mine to share;
secure and still
in the Father's will
and kept by the Father's care.

I lift my eyes
to the quiet hills,
with a prayer as I turn to sleep;
by day, by night,
through the dark and light
my Shepherd will guard His sheep.

I lift my eyes
to the quiet hills,
and my heart to the Father's throne;
in all my ways
to the end of days
the Lord will preserve His own.

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From Psalm 121
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